



Mississippi State Department of Health
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MEDIA ADVISORY

October 21, 2016

Generation FREE L.E.A.D. Conference Comes to Starkville

Conference Focuses on Youth Leadership and Activism in Tobacco Prevention

Starkville, Miss. – The Mississippi State Department of Health's (MSDH) youth-led tobacco prevention program *Generation FREE* will present its **2016 L.E.A.D. (Leadership, Engagement and Activism Development) Conference** on Monday, October 31, at the Mill Conference Center, 100 Mercantile St., Starkville, from 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The *Generation FREE* L.E.A.D. conference is a one-day event to educate youth about the dangers of tobacco use and provide the skills to make healthy lifestyle choices.

According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, tobacco remains the No. 1 cause of preventable death in the United States. In Mississippi, tobacco claims 5,400 lives each year, and \$1.2 billion in health care costs are directly caused by smoking. Approximately 15 percent of Mississippi's high school students smoke.

By attending L.E.A.D., Mississippi high school students in grades 9-12 can take part in four different sessions to learn and share ideas on sustainable changes that can further reduce tobacco use in their schools and communities.

No additional registrations are being accepted for this conference. For more information about the L.E.A.D. Conference, visit www.generationfree.com or contact the MSDH Office of Tobacco Control at 601-991-6050, or email frederick.wiley@healthy-miss.org. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/MSGenerationFREE, or on Twitter and Instagram under @GENFREE11. *Generation FREE* is a program funded by a grant from MSDH and hosted by the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi.

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